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ABSTRACT

Curriculum and program design and evaluation are the subjects of this document, one of 9 modules within an 11-unit resource pack designed to help trainers and postsecondary and continuing education staff meet the needs of special needs students in Great Britain. Having completed this module, staff should be able to: (1) write appropriate goals for a program; (2) state objectives in terms of identifiable outcomes; (3) use principles to inform program design for students with special needs; (4) identify and use appropriate strategies for implementation; (5) collect appropriate information to monitor the design; (6) use appropriate processes to evaluate the program; and (7) design a curriculum or a training program. The introduction lists key questions to be answered by the module, defines the module's purposes, and charts procedures for establishing aims and objectives. The first of four instructional sections deals with how to write goals and objectives in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains. An approach that is an alternative to writing objectives is also discussed. Section 2 asks key questions relevant to programs being designed, suggesting that programs should: (1) be learner centered; (2) provide for access and equal opportunities; (3) have space for negotiation; (4) provide assessment and accreditation; (5) provide for progression; (6) make available guidance, advice, and support; (7) be flexible; (8) be competency based; (9) build in evaluation; and (10) be coordinated. Implementation strategies are the subject of section 3. Section 4 discusses program evaluation, including definitions of evaluation and review, the reasons for evaluating and reviewing, and how and when to evaluate. The module includes eight exercises. (CML)

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LEARNING SUPPORT

CURRICULUM /TRAINING PROGRAMME DESIGN AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES

CE055296

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INTRODUCTION

All successful programmes need sound design principles and experience has shown that there are principles common to all programme planning. Careful attention to detail is essential to enable the full participation of learners with special education/training needs. This involves having a shared clear sense of purpose and direction, developing appropriate strategies for progress and being sensitive to the learners' responses.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What is the process for designing curriculum/training programmes?
- How do you establish aims and objectives?
- What principles and strategies will you use?
- How will you judge the effectiveness of your programme?

AIMS

- To explore the process of designing a curriculum/training programme.
- To consider the implications of the needs of learners with special education/training needs in relation to the design process.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- write appropriate programme aims;
- express objectives in terms of identifiable outcomes;
- use principles to inform programme design for learners with special needs;
- identify and apply appropriate strategies for the delivery of the programme;
- collect appropriate information to enable you to monitor the design;
- use appropriate processes to evaluate the programme;
- design a curriculum/training programme.

Links to other elements include the following:

From the **Introductory Element** you will remember that a model for training programme development was explored.

SIGNPOST
Introductory Element – Section 3

Programme design was a main feature of that model.

What does it entail?

The main points are:

- the consideration and statement of your intentions;
- the use of appropriate design principles;
- the selection of appropriate strategies for delivery;
- procedures for monitoring and review.

Each of these points will be considered in turn.

1. ESTABLISHING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Teaching and training are activities with a purpose. They are intended to enable learners to achieve some desired outcomes. In designing a programme, then, you need to ask:

Where are the learners going?

How are they going to get there?

In choosing the general direction, the selection may seem endless. However, most staff are working within the context of a particular scheme, framework or syllabus and each of these tends to identify the intentions in some form. The following chart indicates some current examples.

The choice then is restricted by being in *receipt* of these sorts of aims and objectives. They frame the overall context within which intentions are expressed.

SIGNPOST

Element 3, Devising Individual Learning Programmes. If you are unsure about how to identify and analyse learner needs you should refer to this section.

The other major factors which must be taken into account are the needs of the learners. Unless you are aware of these your programme design runs the risk of not being relevant and consequently failing. Your intentions must attempt to meet learners' needs.

The focus on individual skills, knowledge and attitudes means that there is a need to co-ordinate the work of individual staff who are having an input into the course/programme. It is no longer possible for staff to work in isolation.

SIGNPOST

Introductory Element.

Increasingly staff are finding it valuable to work in teams.

Teams:

- are groups of staff who have responsibility for the planning and/or delivery of programmes;
- are usually co-ordinated by a leader who makes possible the implementation of a programme;
- enable integrated planning of a programme;
- allow individual staff to work to their strengths and yet see their work in relation to the whole programme;
- provide mutual support for members;
- offer opportunities to share ideas, materials and approaches;
- reduce feeling of isolation.

Individual staff may not have direct responsibility for the overall aims and objectives of the course/training programme. However, to be effective they have to understand what these are and to decide how best they can contribute to these within their own area of expertise. Effective team organisation offers an appropriate way of making this possible.

AIMS	CPVE	YTS(2)	TVEI	ADULT PROGRAMMES	GCSE
SOURCE: **Paragraph [26]** *Relevance, Flexibility and Competence*	SOURCE: *The Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education Parts A and B*	SOURCE: *Development of the Youth Training Scheme*	SOURCE: *TVEI Review 1984*	SOURCE: [A] DES *Adult Unemployed Programme (REPLAN) – Aims and Objectives.* [B] ACSET: *Staff Development for Post-Experience Vocational Education.* [C] ACACE. *Continuing Education: From Policies to Practice.*	SOURCE: *GCSE General Criteria, 1985*
[i] Appropriate learning opportunities regardless of gender, race, age and ability.	The aims of CPVE are to: . . . provide individually relevant educational experience, which encourages learning and achievement. Schools and colleges must make provision for Additional Studies . . . to allow for particular educational needs.	The Commission will be looking for an active commitment from all employers to provide training opportunities for disabled and disadvantaged young people. . . . the Scheme will be open to all young people within the range of eligibility regardless of race, sex or disability . . .	Equal opportunities should be available to young people of both sexes . . . Care should be taken to avoid sex stereotyping.	Development for Post-Experience Vocational Education. [A] Dissemination of information and guidance on good and successful practice and advice on removal or reduction of barriers . . . [B] To identify quickly students' relevant prior experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes, either to take account of them in their teaching or to remedy those which are likely to prove obstacles to the aims of the new courses.	It will be designed not for any proportion of the ability range, but for all candidates . . . there is no minimum or maximum age of entry for the examination . . . every possible effort must be made to ensure that syllabuses and examinations are free of political, ethnic, gender, and other forms of bias.
[ii] Opportunities for all learners to establish a recognised competence-base of knowledge, skills and experience sufficient to facilitate progression into: • employment • further education • training or other roles.	. . . assist the transition from school to adulthood by further equipping young people with basic skills, experiences, attitudes, knowledge and personal and social competences required for success in adult life, including work. . . . provide young people with recognition of their attainments through a qualification which embodies national standards. . . . provide opportunities for progression to continuing education, training and/or work.	Young trainees must be provided with opportunities to achieve competence in a range of core skills . . . a two-year training framework should normally provide a broad base of foundation training leading towards more specific vocational training in the second year. All trainees should seek to acquire a vocational qualification or a credit towards such a qualification . . . of such a nature as to be able to ensure for the young trainee opportunities for progression in employment, further education or training. Trainees need to acquire skills that are common across different occupational areas and different sectors.	Throughout the programme there should be both a general and a technical/vocational element. Students should normally be preparing for one or more nationally recognised qualification . . . On completing their studies, students should be issued by the LEA with a record of achievment. . . . programmes . . . should provide four-year curricula, with progression from year to year, designed to prepare the student for particular aspects of employment and for adult life in a society liable to rapid change.	[A] Augmenting general skills at all levels in ways which may help improve employability, and be useful in everyday activities. [A] Equipping individuals to go on to further study; enabling them to attain new qualifications. [B] To acquire and keep up to date an appropriate body of knowledge.	All examinations must be designed so that candidates across the ability range are given opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, abilities, and achievements: that is, to show what they know, understand and can do.

[iii] An understanding of the local and national economic and social environment, to promote an appreciation of the variety of available adult roles.	... assist the transition from school to adulthood by further equipping young people with basic skills, experiences, attitudes, knowledge required for success in adult life ... ... Exploratory Modules are designed to help students to explore a variety of roles within the cluster ... (Main aim of Industrial, Social and Environmental Studies) To develop knowledge of the workings of modern industry and society and a capacity to cope with the limitations and opportunities afforded.	Young trainees must have the opportunities to develop and demonstrate their ability to transfer skills and knowledge to new tasks, new jobs and new locations.	... programmes ... should provide four-year curricula with progression from year to year, designed to prepare the student for particular aspects of employment and of adult life in a society liable to rapid change. The technical and vocational elements should be broadly related to potential employment opportunities within and outside the geographical area for the young people concerned.	[A] Helping individuals to take stock of their situation and form a realistic view of the options open to them. [C] A democratic society can only be sustained by its individual citizens' ability to take part in and contribute to economic, social and cultural change growth.	Awareness of economic, political, social and environmental factors relevant to the subject which should be encouraged wherever appropriate.
[iv] A basis for learners to increase their self-awareness, to appraise realistically their potential and prospects, and to become progressively responsible for their own personal development.	Activity-based learning also provides the basis for encouraging student self-reliance, development and increasing autonomy. Preparatory Modules are intended to help students to ... refine preferences and identify opportunities for progression. Work experience ... provides young people with ... opportunity to receive 'feedback' on the way they are regarded as workers ... opportunity to check what levels of competence are adequate to the demands of work ...	The schemes must allow for young trainees to develop maturity, self-reliance, inter-personal qualities that are used generally in employment and in adult life. These are all qualities upon which employers place great emphasis in the selection, development and promotion of staff. Part of the purpose of the developed schemes is to enable the individual young person to become a fully independent adult and to acquire the status of a qualified worker.	More emphasis is placed on developing initiative, motivation and enterprise as well as problem solving skills and other aspects of personal development. Arrangements should be made for regular assessment and for students and tutors to discuss students' performance or progress.	[A] Enabling the unemployed through self-evaluation to understand changed circumstances and to adjust accordingly. [B] To identify the motives and needs of students ... and to establish positive links between the two. [C] Every country should ensure the highest possible levels of self-reliance ... among all its citizens, for both their individual and collective well-being.	All syllabuses should be designed to help candidates to understand the subject's relationship to other areas of study and its relevance to the candidate's own life. The examination is intended to record what those leaving full-time education of 16+ have achieved and also to serve as a basis for further study and for entry into training.

(From *Relevance, Flexibility and Competence*, FEU, 1987)

HOW ARE YOUR INTENTIONS EXPRESSED?

Different styles are used by staff.

- One approach is to express intentions as anticipated learner outcomes. In other words what the learner will be able to do, know and understand.
- Another approach is to focus on the activity of the teacher or trainer and the conditions or processes through which learning is to occur.

In both cases the statements vary from the broad to the specific. The broad statements constitute *aims* and the specific statements, *objectives*.

To summarise:

Intentions are expressed as:

Either	or
Learner outcomes	**Teacher/trainer activity**
What the learner will be able to: • do • know • understand	What processes and procedures will be used, to effect learning?
Broad Specific < ---------- > Aims Objectives	Broad Specific < ---------- > Aims Objectives

MORE ABOUT AIMS

When establishing aims it is often useful to ask yourself some questions. Here is a list which you may find useful.

- What is the overall purpose of providing a programme?
- What kinds of knowledge and skills will be useful to learners?
- Where and how does what I intend fit in to the overall purpose?
- What are the priorities for learners?
- Why are they priorities?
- How will I know that the intentions have been fulfilled?

EXERCISE 1. WRITING AIMS

Individual/Small group activity

Establishing and interpreting aims is a useful way of giving direction to your work.

The purpose of this activity is to enable you to practise and develop your skills in drafting aims. Through doing it you should:

- come to a clearer understanding of how they can be written;
- share your ideas on the general intentions of providing a programme for learners with special needs.

1. Use the question check-list above to:

either write a set of aims for a programme you know about,

or write a set of aims for a programme which allows learners with special needs to establish a recognised basis of knowledge, skills and attitudes to allow progression into:

- employment
- further education
- training
- adult life

(You may wish to concentrate on one or two of these areas.)

Small group activity

2. Compare the aims you have written with those of colleagues.
3. Discuss any variations which seem significant. What does this tell you about your approaches/intentions? How and why do your perceptions vary?

MORE ABOUT OBJECTIVES

Often one of the main features of working with learners with special needs is the value of using short steps in the learning process. Some learners find difficulty in making sense of a whole process. They learn more effectively if they master the component elements of a process one at a time. Others need help in transferring a skill they have learnt in one setting to another (for example using keyboard skills developed on a typewriter when faced with a wordprocessor keyboard). This is because the style of learning tends to be concrete, i.e. related to the practical situation and also limited by the situation. Links between different situations are not automatically made.

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

Stating objectives helps to clarify those links and steps. Such clarification not only helps planning, but also gives the learners a picture of where they are going and how they are going to get there. This has been found to be an important motivating factor in many cases.

When you write objectives you should focus on what you expect the learner to do *during* the learning process or be able to do *by the end* of the process. This is an important distinction. The former focuses on the ways or *process* of doing something. The latter gives emphasis to the outcome or *product*. Much depends on whether you see the way things are done, or the final result as important.

Take for example the development of arithmetic skills. You may want to concentrate on the ways in which calculations are done so that the learner can transfer the skill to any context. Alternatively you may want right answers and worry less about 'how they are obtained'.

This analogy shows in fact that both process and product are significant. For some learners with special needs detailing the steps aids learning. For others, who may not be able to use conventional means, allowing flexibility to achieve the same end has value. Thus you should state objectives in the way which best suits learners' needs.

EXERCISE 2. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Small group activity

How specific should an objective be? This is an important consideration when deciding on the steps you intend to include. The purpose of this exercise is to clarify what are general and specific objectives.

1. Look at the following objectives:
   a) That the learner will understand the workings of the motor car.
   b) That the learner will list the main components which make a motor car go.
2. Examine objectives (a) and (b) and consider their characteristics and relationship.
   - How are these objectives linked?
   - What are their differences?

The relationship between objectives (a) and (b) can be explained by stating that objective (b) is part of objective (a); that is, being able to list the main components will help the learner to understand the workings of a motor car.

Objective (a) is therefore, a *general* objective. While it indicates what is generally expected of the learner, it does not show what the learner is to do to show that he/she 'understands the workings of the motor car'.

Objective (b) is a *specific* objective. The activity expected is identified, thus giving the learner the opportunity to demonstrate that the general objective is being attained.

When does a specific objective become a general objective?

No one knows. They simply have tendencies towards one end or another of a continuum from general to specific.

The questions, 'how will I know what the learners are to learn?' and 'how will the learner know what they are to learn?' are more important for programme design.

The key to writing objectives is the verb that you use to describe the learners' behaviour. Accuracy and clarity come from using verbs which have a precise meaning.

EXERCISE 3. USING WORDS IN OBJECTIVES

Small group activity

This exercise is designed to help you clarify the precision with which you should use words.

1. Look at the list of words below which are often encountered in objectives.
2. In groups, decide which are open to few and which to many interpretations.

- appreciate
- write
- know
- answer
- compare
- understand
- grasp
- list
- draw

WRITING OBJECTIVES

The key to writing objectives is the verb you use to describe learner behaviour.

General objectives usually include the following words:

- appreciate
- fully appreciate
- grasp the significance of
- know
- understand

Specific objectives usually include the following words:

- answer
- compare
- enjoy
- listen
- recognise
- ask
- contrast
- identify
- measure
- state
- attend
- describe
- label
- name
- type
- calculate
- draw
- list
- read
- write

CLASSIFYING OBJECTIVES

To clarify our thinking about objectives, several academics have suggested that objectives may be written in areas of different types of learning. For example, learners may learn to do things with their hands, or with their 'brains' or may learn new attitudes. Obviously these three areas or 'domains' are connected, but being aware of the three domains has helped some teachers and trainers with their work. The three domains are better known as:

- cognitive domain – 'head'
- psychomotor domain – 'hand'
- affective domain – 'heart'

The most widely known classification of educational objectives is that associated with the American, B S Bloom, and his associates. While controversy surrounds the value of classification, it is certainly worth spending some time studying it.

The Bloom's taxonomy can help you in two ways:

1. It attempts to organise objectives in the three domains.
2. Within each domain, an attempt is made to outline a hierarchy of objectives in order of difficulty.

A brief outline of Bloom's taxonomy is given on the following pages.

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

Knowledge – lowest form of learning in this domain, the learner is required to remember previously learned material.

Comprehension – incorporates above and requires the learner to grasp the meaning of the material.

Application – incorporates above and requires the learner to use the material in new situations.

Analysis – incorporates above and requires the learner to break down material.

Synthesis – incorporates above and requires the learner to put the parts together to form a new whole.

Evaluation – incorporates above and requires the learner to judge the value of material for a given purpose.

Verbs used in this domain include:

- categorises
- describes
- justifies
- selects
- concludes
- contrasts
- explains
- relates
- states
- identifies

9

- defines
- predicts
- solves
- reorganises
- summarises

PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAIN

The heirachy of skills in this domain is incomplete but verbs in this domain include:

- assembles
- cleans
- corrects
- drills
- hammers
- mends
- sews
- builds
- composes
- creates
- fastens
- heats
- nails
- wraps
- sketches
- calibrates
- connects
- designs
- fixes
- makes
- paints
- weighs
- changes
- constructs
- dismantles
- grips
- manipulates
- saws

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

Receiving – lowest form of learning in this domain, the learner is required to attend willingly particular phenomena or stimuli.

Responding – incorporates above and requires the learner to react to the phenomenon.

Valuing – incorporates above and requires the learner to value the phenomenon.

Organisation – incorporates above and requires the learner to bring together different values, resolving conflicts between them, and beginning the building of an internally consistent value system.

Characterising a value or value complex – incorporates above and requires the learner to show that he/she has developed a characteristic 'life-style'.

Verbs used in this domain include:

- ask
- initiate
- show awareness
- assist
- listen
- show concern
- give
- read
- show interest
- hold
- share
- show sensitivity

BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES APPROACH

For some learners with special needs, this approach has much to commend it. It provides:

- a clear statement of what they should be able to do by the end of a learning session;
- the level or standard required;
- the conditions under which the activity can be achieved;
- a *focus* on the learners and what *they* are to learn.

This approach usually begins by finding out what the learner can do before the course begins; if the learner can already do half of what you intend to teach him/her, then the learner and you are wasting half your time. Once it has been established what the learner

can and cannot do, the course can be adjusted to suit the need of the learners. Of course, identifying 'entry behaviour' is not the sole property of the behavioural objectives approach and can be used in the planning of all courses/programmes.

SIGNPOST

Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes
Introductory Element
Element 5. Training/ teaching and learning strategies (Task analysis)

The other central feature of this approach is the precision required in writing a behavioural objective. For example, consider the following objective:

- The learner will write an essay on the workings of the motor car.

How precise is this objective? Do you know what the learners will be doing?

Consider these questions next.

Given the objective 'the learner will write an essay on the workings of the motor car', it seems acceptable for the learner to copy an essay from a text-book. Thus the learner will have achieved the objective and learned nothing as presumably the learner was already able to copy essays from textbooks. While this may seem pedantic, it is often a feature of a behavioural objective that the conditions and constraints qualifying terminal behaviour are stated.

The objective could now be rewritten as follows:

That 'the learner will write an essay identifying the main working parts of the motor car under the following conditions and constraints:

1. The learner may use textbooks and other written information.
2. The learners may not talk to each other.
3. The essay will be completed in two hours.'

What is now missing from this objective is an indication of the standard that will be acceptable to you as the teacher or trainer. What are you looking for? How will you identify a 'good' answer, a 'satisfactory' answer or a 'failure'? You could state that the learner will include a minimum of 10 of the 20 points included in the marking scheme and that marks will be given for well organised work.

Thus a behavioural objective often includes:

1. the stated terminal behaviour;
2. conditions and constraints qualifying terminal behaviour;
3. standards of terminal performance.

The behavioural objective approach has been criticised because:

- it only identifies the end product and not *how* the product is to be achieved;
- it is fairly rigid, not allowing learners to choose courses of action;
- it concentrates too much on the fine detail, so that the overall purpose is lost;
- it can emphasise the 'trivial', i.e. what is easy to observe and measure while overlooking the significant;
- it can lead to a focus on the quantity of response, rather than the quality (i.e. how many times the learner got the 'right' result, not whether they understood how and why they achieved the result).

ALTERNATIVE TO OBJECTIVES APPROACH

The traditional method of planning a course is to examine the content, design objectives and organise learner activity to achieve the objectives. Another approach is to consider the activities in which learners should be involved and use content as a 'vehicle' to involve learners in these activities. Some examining and validating bodies have tended to move towards this approach. J D Raths in 'Teaching without Specific Objectives' (Education Leadership, April 1971), identified the following 'worthwhile activities' as a guide to curriculum/programme planning:

1. If it permits learners to make informed choices and to reflect on the consequences of their choices.

2. If it assigns to learners active roles in the learning situation rather than passive ones.
3. If it asks learners to engage in enquiry into ideas.
4. If it involves learners with reality.
5. If completion of the activity may be accomplished successfully by learners at several different levels of ability.
6. If it asks learners to examine in a new setting an idea, an application of an intellectual process, or a current problem which has been studied previously.
7. If it requires learners to examine topics or issues that citizens in our society do not normally examine.
8. If it involves risk taking, i.e. a risk to success or failure.
9. If it requires learners to rewrite, rehearse and polish their initial efforts.
10. If it involves the mastery of meaningful rules, standards or disciplines.
11. If it gives learners a chance to share the planning, the carrying out of a plan, or the results of an activity with others.
12. If it is relevant to the expressed purposes of the learner.

The issues raised by these alternative approaches are best considered in relation to the needs of the learners. In cases where the learners require small, precise steps, the behavioural objectives approach has considerable value. Tying down other learners to this approach may lead to frustration and lack of motivation. For them a more flexible set of alternatives may prove valuable.

● ● ● EXERCISE 4. LINKING OBJECTIVES TO AIMS

Small group activity

It must always be remembered that objectives are not established in a vacuum. They have to be derived from the overall programme/course aims if the latter are to be fulfilled.

The purpose of this exercise is to enable you to practise writing different types of objectives related to overall aims.

1. Look at the aims you established in Exercise 1.
2. Select one or two of them.
3. (a) Write a set of behavioural objectives appropriate for learners who would benefit from a short-step approach. You may find it helpful to refer to the case-studies from the Resources Section.

   (b) Write a set of general process objectives for learners who would benefit from a flexible approach.
4. Compare each set in mixed groups. Discuss whether the statements:

   a) meet the aim;

   b) suit the learners' needs.

2. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Having established learner needs and expressed them in the form of aims and objectives the question to be asked is:

What principles shall I use in designing the programme? There is a wealth of information on programme design to guide you.

From these a fairly consistent set of design principles has emerged.

Programmes should:

- be learner centred
- provide for access/equal opportunities
- have space for negotiation
- provide assessment and accreditation
- provide for progression
- make available guidance, advice and support
- be flexible
- be competence based
- build in evaluation
- be co-ordinated

● ● ● EXERCISE 5. WHAT THE PRINCIPLES MEAN

Small group activity

You may have heard or read of these terms. For them to be effectively implemented there is a need for some shared understanding of their meaning. This will help you to make an appropriate contribution to the programme/course. This exercise provides you with the opportunity to establish shared understanding.

1. Each group select two principles from the list.
2. Discuss what the terms mean and come to some shared understanding.
3. Write down your understanding.
4. Feed back your definitions to the rest of the group.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Guidelines to facilitators

- Five groups will enable all principles to be covered. If there are only a few members present then you could treat the principles sequentially.
- To ensure that the shared understanding corresponds to commonly held meanings, feed in the set of questions about each principle provided in the following pages.

We now look at these principles in further detail. For each principle a set of pertinent questions is posed.

LEARNER CENTREDNESS

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies

- How do you get the learner to the starting line?
- What do they need to be able to cope?
- What needs has the learner identified?
- How do you help a group support an individual with special needs?
- How do you manage time and space to take account of needs?
- How do you break down the programme into easily achievable steps?

ACCESSIBILITY

SIGNPOST
User's Guide

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and Support

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies

- How do you market the programme?
- How is it presented?
- What is the climate of the setting like: welcoming? off-putting?
- What are the attitudes of colleagues and other learners towards those with special needs?
- How do you establish awareness?
- Who will speak for the learners: others? themselves?
- What information do you need to know from the learners in order to make a programme accessible?
- Where do you get it from?
- What aids and adaptations are necessary regarding equipment, learning materials, the physical environment?
- What additional support is required by the learners to enable them to participate fully?
- How do you gauge the emotional needs of the learners? How do you enable learners to cope with the course on offer?

NEGOTIATION

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and Support

- What is negotiable?
- Who negotiates: everybody?
- What skills do the learners need in order to negotiate?
- How do they identify and communicate needs?
- How do they make choices and take action?
- How do they come to accept the consequences of decisions?
- How do you act on what has been negotiated?
- How do you build in review: ongoing? phased?

ASSESSMENT

SIGNPOST
Element 4. Assessment and Review

- What is to be assessed: prior learning? initial abilities? developing abilities? what the learner has achieved?
- When does assessment take place: at the beginning? ongoing? at the end?
- How do you assess?
- What tools do you use?
- What language do you use?
- What size of steps do you apply?

PROGRESSION

SIGNPOST
User's Guide

- Where does the programme fit into the development of the learner?
- How does your element fit into the whole programme?
- What does it lead to?
- How does it relate to the development of the learner?

GUIDANCE, ADVICE AND SUPPORT

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and support

- What mechanisms do you provide for these?
- Who is the first point of contact for the learner?
- When do you seek more specialist support?
- How do the learners resolve their problems/worries?
- How does the learner know where to get guidance, advice and support?

FLEXIBILITY

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies

SIGNPOST
Element 6. Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials

- Does the programme allow for modification?
- How do you respond to changes?
- Does the programme enable learners to develop at their own pace?
- What variety of opportunities and learning experiences is in the programme?

COMPETENCE

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 4. Assessment and Review

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies

At the end of the programme:

- What skills will the learners have?
- What will the learners be able to do?
- What will they know and understand?
- What attitudes will they possess?
- How do you measure these?
- What standards do you apply?

EVALUATION

SIGNPOST
Section 5, Evaluation and review at the end of this element

- How do you judge the process the learners undertake?
- How do you judge your own performance?
- What review procedures do you use to act on the evaluation?
- How do you modify future programmes as a consequence of review?

CO-ORDINATION

SIGNPOST
User's Guide

SIGNPOST
Introductory Element

- How do you ensure that the elements of the programme fit together?
- How do you enable learners to have a coherent experience?
- Do you have a team approach to design and delivery?

These lists of questions identify key elements of each principle of design.

To find the answers you will need to make reference to appropriate elements of the package identified, and to undertake the activity at the beginning of this section in order to work out answers in relation to your own context.

There are no universal answers. Specific programme planning will be determined by the application of the principles to:

- your situation
- the particular needs of your learners
- the context – course/framework/scheme
- physical environment

3. STRATEGIES

How, in general terms, is the curriculum/training programme going to be implemented, i.e. what strategy will you use?

In making decisions on this you will need to take account of:

- programme aims and objectives
- the needs of learners
- principles which apply
- the nature of existing provision
- available resources

The first three of these have already been considered. The latter two are related to your particular context.

So then, what are strategies? They are for example:

- approaches to the delivery of course/training programme;
- plans laid to use resources available to implement principles and aims. Particularly the latter relate to the frameworks for implementation.

Some specific examples:

Modular	< ---------- >	Linear
Individual	< ---------- >	Group
In-house	< ---------- >	Outreach
Single agency	< ---------- >	Multi-agency
Staff-led	< ---------- >	Open learning

Which end of the continuum?

Notice that each strategy has been expressed on a 'continuum'. In practice it is unlikely that each extreme of the continuum is used exclusively. For example a totally individualised programme carries the danger of not stimulating interactive and co-operative skills. A group-based programme runs the risk of not catering sufficiently to individual needs. In the majority of cases a position along the continuum will have been chosen to take account of the range of issues identified above.

Thus in the case of the individual – group strategy, available staff resources may not be sufficient to allow for a totally individualised programme.

What about the relationship principles?

The design principles (identified in the previous section) should be reflected in the strategies employed. For example, if flexibility is accepted as a principle, then a linear strategy may be inappropriate. Similarly, access may be compromised by making provision in-house if appropriate adaptations are not available.

Are these strategies mutually exclusive?

No. It is possible to combine the strategies. To take an extreme example:

A programme could be: modular, group based, in-house, multi-agency, staff-led.

This example illustrates that strategies could, and should, be used in conjunction.

EXERCISE 6. DESIGNING A COURSE/TRAINING PROGRAMME

Whole group activity

The development of the team approaches to planning has led to the need for all staff involved in a course/training programme to understand its overall implications.

This exercise gives you the opportunity to explore and practise the processes involved in planning.

Small group activity

1. Read the case-study provided.
2. Act as the design team for the course/training programme.
3. Design an outline programme for the learners.

To do this you will need to:

- write course aims;
- apply appropriate design principles;
- select and write down strategies for delivery.

Guidelines for facilitators

There are two case-studies provided (one for FE, one for YTS).

Either choose an appropriate case-study to use with the group,

or use the exercise to help in the design of a programme you are planning.

You may find it useful to refer to:

- *YTS Training for Skills* (MSC, 1986)
- *YTS Special Training Needs – A Code of Practice* (1988)
- *CPVE Parts A/B* (Joint Board for Pre-Vocational Education, 1985)
- *Relevance, Flexibility and Competence* (FEU, 1987)

YTS CASE-STUDY

Community Services Unit is a community based YTS scheme that has been involved in youth training for eight years. All the trainees on the scheme attract premium funding and, in addition to the range of special needs that these young people bring, there are a number of trainees with Permanent Additional Funding for Disablement (PAFD) who have quite specific special training needs related to disability. The scheme offers training in Construction, Retail and Caring and, after an initial induction period of three weeks, trainees have to decide which vocational route to follow. They then carry out a programme of planned work experience on placement with off-the-job courses run by scheme staff at a training centre.

Based on the document *YTS, Special Training Needs – A Code of Practice*, the management of a scheme has decided to offer all trainees a broad-based foundation course from which they will be able to progress into a more directly vocational programme at any point in their first year. The course will follow the guidelines of the code of practice:

> '... foundation training and development can vary in length according to individual needs. It is aimed at developing personal effectiveness, e.g. trainee motivation, self-sufficiency, communication skills, initiative and acceptance of responsibility where necessary, so that young people can make progress in all of the YTS outcomes.'
>
> (*YTS Special Training Needs – A Code of Practice*)

FE CASE-STUDY

Wybridge FE College has six departments: construction, business studies and office arts, health care and beauty therapy, modern studies, science and technology, special/community needs.

It is situated on two sites, three miles apart. The main site is in the centre of the town. The departments of construction, and science and technology share the ground floor while the main office, staff rooms and general department with information technology and model office facilities occupy the third floor. The top floor is given over to health care and beauty therapy.

The annexe is a former school building on three storeys. All the rooms are general purpose and the staff of the special and community needs department and the modern studies department are housed here.

The college Academic Board has established a policy to make provision for learners with special needs. The first step was to make both sites accessible for wheelchair users at ground floor level. The main site has a lift, but no clearance has yet been obtained from health and safety officers to make it available to wheelchair users.

As the next stage in policy implementation, the Academic Board has decided to establish an integrated course for a range of learners and it has chosen a CPVE framework to do this.

A group of six staff has been selected (from each department) to design a programme.

The initial intake will be 55 students. Twelve of these already attend the college on a link course with local special schools. Of these twelve, seven have moderate learning difficulties. Additionally, two are visually impaired and three are wheelchair users. Of the other potential students, 15 are drawn from the high band of the local comprehensive, taking six GCSE courses, 20 are drawn from the middle band and 12 are from a remedial unit.

4. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

As has been suggested earlier in the package, curriculum/training programme development is a circular process.

SIGNPOST
Introductory Element

It is vital to have some means of checking the effectiveness of design and implementation. This needs to be thought out at the design stage so that it forms an integral part of the whole process. It is not a 'bolt on' afterthought.

What is evaluation?

- In relation to courses/training programmes it is the process by which evidence is collected to allow judgements to be made about their efficiency and effectiveness.

What is review?

- In relation to courses/training programmes it is the application of evaluation by reappraisal and appropriate amendment of programmes.

Why do it?

- To give information about the effectiveness of programme design.
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in design.
- To review and modify design.
- To provide the most effective possible programme for learners.

How do you evaluate?

- By actively involving learners and staff in making judgements about provision.
- By using a variety of techniques.
- By cross-checking responses.

When do you evaluate?

- At the initial or piloting stages of a programme to form or confirm ideas.
- Throughout the running of the programme to get feedback on the *process* and make (minor) adjustments.
- At the end of the programme to judge its overall effectiveness and inform review and modification.

From the above it becomes clear that any course/training programme should be *monitored* throughout. If you leave the evaluation until the end, then:

- You cannot respond to the changing needs of the learners.
- You cannot identify clearly which parts of the process are successful/unsuccessful.
- The value of any modification is lost to the current group of learners.

Evaluation processes can be developed in different ways. In the following pages we provide some ideas regarding the practicalities. These will help you whether you are directly involved in planning evaluation or asked to participate in information gathering and review.

EXERCISE 7. SELECTING AND COLLECTING

Whole group activity

As a first step in the process you need to decide what information you want and how you intend to collect it.

This activity is designed to help you to make these choices.

1. Brainstorm the information which you think it would be most valuable to collect in making judgements about a programme with reference to:
   - the initial design
   - processes of delivery
   - outcomes.
2. List possible ways of collecting this information.

(You may find it useful to refer to a current training programme or course to focus your ideas.)

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

These are some of the types of questions that could be asked of both staff and learners as part of the evaluation process.

Purpose of the course

- Do you know what the course is about?
- Are the aims and objectives clear?
- Do you understand what they mean?
- Does the course/programme cater for your needs?

Processes of the course

- What approaches to learning are provided?
- Are these approaches appropriate?
- Is the pace/timing of the programme appropriate?
- Is there a balance between individual and group work?
- Are the methods used understood?
- Are the materials and resources suitable?

Content

- Is the content made clear?
- Is it at the right level?
- Is it in an appropriate order?
- Are the various parts of content integrated?

Support

- Are there appropriate means of providing guidance and advice?
- Is this a regular part of the programme?
- Are there appropriate specialist facilities and resources?

Communication

- Is the information about the programme clear?
- Are there appropriate means for passing information on a routine basis?
- Is the information flow two way?

Assessment

- Are the means of assessment clear?
- Is there variety in the assessment techniques used?
- Are the means appropriate to the learners?
- Are all aspects of learning covered in the assessment?
- Do the learners know what is required of them?

These questions can help you form the basis of information gathering.

EVOLVING EVALUATION

It has been stressed that evaluation should form an integral part of the programme. Therefore it seems sensible that the methods used should arise 'naturally' in almost everything you do.

Here are some ideas.

- The early stages of implementation give an opportunity to get a 'feel' of the programme. Regular and frequent meetings of staff are valuable since they serve to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the initial design and provide support for implementation. If the design has been a shared activity, then commitment to making it work tends to follow. Staff should be encouraged to express their personal views towards the programme.

  When an assignment as work sheet or learning activity is given to the learners, include the objectives and a justification for the work. (This may be in written form, but verbal reports may also be necessary for some learners with special needs.)

- When learners meet staff individually, for example for periodic review, discuss their comments. In addition you can ask the learners for their overall impressions of the course. (Given the emphasis on negotiation and flexibility in design, such meetings will be built in on a regular formal basis, although informal meetings are also typical.)

  As the learner-centred curriculum is about the exercise of learner choice, students should be asked, for example:

  - To what extent are they able to negotiate learning activities?
  - To what extent are they able to exercise choice of work areas/topics?
  - To what extent does the timetable affect this choice?
  - To what extent can the learners decide on the pace of learning?
  - To what extent do they feel there is too much/too little freedom?

- This information can be recorded and shared at regular staff meetings (say every six weeks) to discuss the progress of learners and the programme. Some important questions to ask here include:

  - What are the learners' reactions to the course/programme so far?
  - Where are the strengths and weaknesses in the programme?
  - Is negotiation successful?
  - Why have learners left the programme?
  - What changes need to be made?

This exchange enables ongoing review and modifications to take place.

Both learners and staff can maintain a log or diary of the Programme. Such a device can be used to record both events and reactions to them, and give a picture of the *individual's* experience. By completing it weekly (or even daily) the *detail* is stored. This avoids the problem of trying to recall what happened when, which often results in generalised impressions.

At the end of the course/programme a summary view of it is needed to judge its overall effectiveness and inform any major modification that may be made.

Questions for learners and staff (in a questionnaire format or as an evaluation check-list) usually form the basis of this.

You will probably need information about:

- content – was it appropriate?
- process – did the strategies work?
- value of the experience – did the learners gain enough from it? (Here the log/diary has great benefits.)

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The number of questions asked is best judged by balancing the time needed to complete them against the detail that you require.

The way you ask the questions depends on the learners. They need to be able to answer them (i.e. questions should be short, simple, unambiguous) and the format needs to be appropriate. Remember learners with special needs may find difficulty, for example, with written communication or in understanding questions. Think of this as another learning material and make sure it suits the special needs of the learners.

Once you have the appropriate information from learners and staff, classify it so that an overall picture emerges. It is at this point that you need to meet as a group, to review the findings and modify the programme as appropriate for the subsequent group of learners.

●●●● EXERCISE 8. DESIGNING AN EVALUATION STRATEGY

Whole group activity

Evaluation and review are the last essential part of programme design. In order to ensure that proper monitoring takes place an evaluation strategy should be produced at the design stage. In this way a check can be kept on the fulfilment of the aims and objectives and, where necessary, appropriate modification made.

This activity provides a vehicle to develop such a strategy.

●●●

small group activity

1. As a group, design an evaluation strategy for a course/training programme you are familiar with.
2. Take into account:
   - initial evaluation of design
   - does it make sense in relation to the needs of the learners?
   - monitoring of course/training programme as it operates
   - are the needs of the learners being met?
   - is the content relevant?
   - are the learning processes used appropriate?
   - is there adequate support?

Final review of the course/training programme:

- Have the aims and objectives been met?
- Does the programme work?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the course/training programme?
- What modifications are required to design, implementation and support?

Any modifications you make to design or implementation will again need to be monitored and reviewed. Different learners have different needs so what suits one particular group may not be appropriate to the next. It is this point which lies at the heart of programme development and it is the reason, ultimately, for the curricular process.

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- write aims for a course/training programme?
- state objectives related to those aims?
- distinguish between general and specific objectives?
- distinguish between process and product objectives?
- identify and use appropriate design principles?
- identify and choose appropriate strategies for implementation?
- say what is meant by evaluation?
- design and use an evaluation strategy for your course/training programme?

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST
The Introductory Element – Section 3

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes section on identifying and analysing learner needs

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies – task analysis.

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and Support

SIGNPOST
Element 4. Assessment and Review

SIGNPOST
Element 6. Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials

SIGNPOST
User Guide